

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L YAOUNDE 3658

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PINT, CM, FR

1. SEPT 27 DCM PAID COURTESY CALL JACQUES NEGRE, CHARGE FRENCH EMBASSY, AND DISCUSSED NUMBER ASPECTS CAMEROON INTERNAL POLITICS AND FRENCH RELATIONS.

2. DCM NOTED RUMORED INCREASE UPC ACTIVITY AND WONDERED HOW FRENCH VIEWED SITUATION. NEGRE SAID IN HIS VIEW UPC DID NOT CONSTITUTE ANY INTERNAL THREAT AND CITED LACK RESPONSE RECENT CALL FOR GENERAL STRIKE AS EVIDENCE UPC INABILITY DO ANYTHING EXCEPT CIRCULATE TRACTS. AS FAR AS FRANCE WAS CONCERNED, THERE REALLY NO UPC ACTIVITY HIS COUNTRY. HOWEVER, THERE ACTIVE UPC SUPPORTERS IN CANADA, SWITZERLAND AND ALGERIA. HE FELT IT WAS UPC GURIOUS IN THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH MIGHT BE IN POSITION CAUSE TROUBLE.

3. DCM MENTIONED RUMOR CIRCULATING NUMBER OF MONTHS AGO THAT AHIDJO HAD REQUESTED ADDITIONAL FRENCH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MILITARY BECAUSE OF DISCONTENT WITHIN ARMY. NOW THERE ADDITIONAL STORY THAT FRENCH SENDING UP TO ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED GENDARMES WHO WILL SERVE IN CAMEROONIAN UNIFORMS AS TECHNICAL ASSISTANTS. NEGRE STATED THAT NUMBER FRENCH MILITARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANTS FOR ALL SERVICES, INCLUDING GENDARMERIE, HAS AND WILL
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REMAIN CONSTANT AT 95. IN ADDITION, HE UNAWARE OF ANY CAMEROONIAN REQUEST FOR INCREASED MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN

TERMS OF EQUIPMENT OR SUPPLIES.

4. ON EXTERNAL MILITARY THREATS, NEGRE DOWNPLAYED ANY THREATS FROM EX-FRENCH TERRITORIES, BUT SAID COMEROONIANS WORRIED ABOUT SIZE AND STRENGTH OF NIGERIA AND REFUGEE PROBLEM OF EQUATORIAL GUINEA.

5. SEVERAL MEDIA SOURCES HAVE TOLD OUR INFORMATION OFFICER ABOUT TRIBAL DUST-UP AT MBANDJOCK SUGAR MILL. ALLEGEDLY, DRIVER FROM BASSA TRIBE (BETWEEN DOUALA AND EDEA IN ORIGIN) HIT AND KILLED BAMILEKE (ACTIVE IN COMMERCE FROM BAFOUSSAM AREA). BAMILEKE IN RETALIATION RIADED BASSA VILLAGE AND KILLED UP 12 PEOPLE; SOME 30 ODD WERE WOUNDED. POLICE FINALLY CALLED IN TO CALM DOWN SITUATION. NEGRE SIAD HE HAD HEARD SIMILAR STORY, BUT HE HAD NO HARD FACTS. HE WOULD ATTEMPT LOOK INTO MATTER AND LET DCM KNOW.

6. COMMENT: LONG-TIME FOLLOWERS CAMEROONIAN AFFAIRS WILL RECALL THERE NUMBER SMOULDERING ETHNIC RIVALRIES WHICH ARE WHILE INFREQUENT, DO HAPPEN. THEY USUALLY INVOLVE BEMILEKE, WHO, DUE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION COMMERCIAL LIFE, USUALLY TARGETS RATHER THAN PERPETRATORS OF ETHNIC CLASHES. COMHANTS BY NEGRE ON CAMEROONIAN SECURITY SITUATION WOULD INDICATE THAT FRENCH NOT PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT SECURITY SITUATION AND ARE NOT PLANNING ON INCREASING THEIR LEVEL MILITARY ASSISTANCE. SPIRO

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